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Bobby Boomer

AUTHENTIC BABY BOOMER DOLL!

**Comes with
disposable income**

Likes new brands

Buys luxury items

Reads mail

**COLLECT ALL
77 MILLION BOOMERS**



Reaching Boomers With Mail

As more than half of the Boomer Generation pushes past 50 – and out of the “coveted” 18–49 target – many marketers believe the Baby Boom has become the Baby Bust. Well, as this study is about to show, reality once again debunks perception.

Fact is, this largest segment of the American population continues to be a Baby Boon.

They are much less brand-rigid than the generation that preceded them, and they boast far greater spending power than the generations that come after. What’s more, they’ve shown themselves to be both receptive and responsive to a marketing medium that has grown and evolved right along with them: mail.

So while the Boomer Generation is aging, don’t pack them away on a shelf just yet. *Reaching Boomers With Mail* reveals why they’re such a fertile target in today’s profit-or-perish marketplace, and why mail can be an effective media channel for getting them to take action.



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BOOMER SPECIFICATIONS:

- Birth years: 1946–1964
- U.S. total: 77 million
- Percent of population: 27.5
- Number of households: 45.8 million
- Annual spending power: \$2.1 trillion



Baby Boomers: They make a great gift for marketers.

About Reaching Boomers With Mail: This examination of mail and the Baby Boom Generation is based on a number of recent sources, including the “Value of Mail” research conducted by InnoMedia on behalf of the U.S. Postal Service®; *The Role of Media Today* by the U.S. Postal Service; “Direct Marketing 2005: Retail” by Vertis Customer Focus; “Health & Wellness in the Boomer Generation” CD-ROM by the Women2Women Communications Group; “Baby Boomers Grow Up: Reaching the Nation’s Mature Target” by the Small Business Administration; and the *BusinessWeek* article “Love Those Boomers: Their New Attitudes and Lifestyles Are a Marketer’s Dream” by Louise Lee (October 24, 2005).

Meet the new old.

Born in 1946, the oldest of the Baby Boom Generation are now entering their 60s – an age where people tend to slow down, tighten their purse strings, and exhibit an unflinching loyalty to their established set of products and brands. In other words, they become anti-consumers in the eyes of all marketers not selling denture cream or bursitis balm. But growing up in the radical 1960s, these Boomers have always been different. And today, not surprisingly, we find that they are defying the age-old perception of old age:

Perception: Age breeds financial conservatism.

Reality: Baby Boomers are proving to be liberal spenders who go for all the bells and whistles. Case in point: They purchase 50% of all luxury vehicles and 80% of all travel.

Perception: Older people don’t change brands.

Reality: Perhaps because they came of age in the experimental Woodstock Era, Boomers are as willing as under-40 consumers to try new brands.

Perception: The golden years are a time of rest and relaxation.

Reality: Boomers are leading busier lives than ever. Indeed, 80% say they will continue to work into their 60s, and many will go back to school, start a business, or take on a second career in retirement. Health and fitness also play major roles in their lives.

Now that we’ve uncovered the real Boomer, let’s examine how marketers can harness the distinct powers of mail to drive this generation to respond.

Insight 1 Mail gets their attention.

Boomers may be busy, but mail commands their attention. Recent Postal research shows that:

- 95% of Boomers sort through their mail the day they bring it in
- 79% bring in their mail the day it’s delivered
- 50% say they look forward to discovering the mail each day

As these statistics illustrate, mail offers marketers a unique opportunity to get their product or offer noticed by an overwhelming percentage of the Boomer target. And because Boomers are willing to try new brands, mail provides the media “real estate” to fully introduce a product. And, as always, an ongoing mail campaign to existing customers delivers the one-to-one contact to help keep them loyal to a brand.

Spotlight on word choice: When composing a Direct Mail message for Boomers, word choice is critical. According to “Baby Boomers Grow Up” by the Small Business Administration, “Don’t address the 50-plus group by calling it ‘older’ or ‘senior’; the words ‘mature’ or ‘prime’ are viewed in a much more positive light.”



Insight 2 Mail gets their business.

Despite the fact that Boomers spend more time on the Internet than any other generation, they are more likely than consumers under 40 to read catalogs and advertising mail. What’s more:

- 56% of Boomers say they have shopped from catalogs received in the mail in the past month – compared to 45% of consumers aged 30–39
- In the future, a mere 12% of Boomers see themselves using only the Internet instead of looking through catalogs

Another useful fact for marketers: Boomers are less likely than consumers under 40 to clip coupons and hunt for bargains. They have the disposable income to afford indulgences, and many from this generation actively seek feature-rich, top-of-the-line products.

Spotlight on the Internet: 72% of Boomers worry about providing personal information during such Internet transactions as shopping and banking. In addition, Boomers believe that mail pieces are easier to use, store, and keep at hand than electronic information.



Insight 3 Mail gets them to stores.

When examining the shopping habits of Boomers, research reveals that they place a much higher value on privacy and security than younger consumers. Studies by the Postal Service™ and Vertis Customer Focus uncovered that:

- 59% of Boomers would rather shop at a store than online because they’re concerned about unauthorized access to personal information

Clearly, retail marketers have a ripe target in Boomers – and mail is proving to be a smart, trackable way to drive them to stores. One statistic in particular underscores this:

- After receiving a mail piece from a store they don’t typically patronize, female Boomers are 27% more likely than younger women to visit that store

Spotlight on health care: The Baby Boom Generation accounts for a startling 58% of all health-care spending – and as they age, this number is likely to grow. Because of their concern with security and privacy, mail is an ideal medium for reaching Boomers with this sensitive information.



GET MORE BOOM FOR YOUR BUCK.

As these studies attest, some Baby Boomers may be out of the 18–49 target, but they should not be out of a marketer’s sights. They’re flush with disposable income, open to new brands, and entering a reward phase of their lives in which they’ll splurge on top-end luxury items. At the same time, mail arms marketers with an effective channel for connecting with the Boomer crowd. This generation pays attention to mail, they shop through the mail, and they appreciate the privacy that mail offers. And because mail garners one of the highest revenues per contact—over \$11.00, according to the Postal Service study *The Role of Media Today* – it truly helps deliver Boomer bucks.

